

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9502

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 8428

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ECIN, PINT, KE, TZ, UG

SUBJ: HOSTILITY TOWARD EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY EXPRESSED
IN KENYA PARLIAMENT

REF: NAIROBI 8388

1. SUMMARY: IN ITS FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO DEBATE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC) SINCE RECENT FUNDING CUTOFF, PARLIAMENT DEMONSTRATED CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF ANTI-TANZANIA AND ANTI-COMMUNITY SENTIMENT. IN CONTRAST TO OFFICIAL STATEMENTS LAMENTING EAC DEMISE, ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO ANNOUNCED HE WAS CELEBRATING WITH CHAMPAGNE. END SUMMARY.

2. DEMISE OF EAC WAS RAISED IN PARLIAMENT JULY 5 FOR FIRST TIME SINCE BEFORE JUNE 30, WHEN EAC FISCAL YEAR ENDED AND TRI-STATE FUNDING CEASED. CONTEXT WAS DEBATE ON BILL INTRODUCED BY FINANCE MINISTER Nwai Kibaki PROVIDING FOR CREATION OF NEW KENYA GOVERNMENT CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DEPART-
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MENT. DEPARTMENT WOULD PERFORM FUNCTIONS HERETOFORE FILLED BY EAC ENTITY.

3. IN PRESENTING BILL KIBAKI HEWED TO WHAT HAS BEEN STANDARD GOK LINE ON EAC DEMISE; I.E. THAT KENYA REGRETTEED EAC'S FATE, AND HAD TRIED ITS BEST TO ENSURE ITS CONTINUA-TION, BUT THAT TANZANIAN INTRANSIGENCE ON BORDER CLOSURE

AND ITS CONSTANT RHETORICAL ABUSE OF KENYA DEMONSTRATED THAT TANZANIA WAS NO LONGER INTERESTED IN THE COMMUNITY.

4. ENSUING DEBATE, HOWEVER, MADE CLEAR THAT NOT ALL KENYAN LEADERS LAMENT SITUATION. MOST CONSPICUOUSLY AND IMPORTANTLY, ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO TOLD PARLIAMENT HE HAD BEEN SO DELIGHTED WITH EAC BREAKUP THAT HE DRANK FIVE CUPS OF CHAMPAGNE TO CELEBRATE. HE SAID HE DID NOT LIKE THE COMMUNITY AND MADE NO SECRET OF HIS FEELINGS. ACCORDING TO MP'S PRESENT IN THE CHAMBER AT THE TIME, NJONJO'S REMARKS WERE GREETED WITH LAUGHTER AND CHEERS. NJONJO ALSO REPORTEDLY SUGGESTED TO PARLIAMENT THAT TANZANIANS IN KENYA BE EXPELLED IN RETALIATION FOR EXPULSION OF KENYANS FROM TANZANIA. APPROXIMATELY 10 OTHER MP'S FROM DIFFERENT PARTS OF KENYA, AND WITH DIFFERENT POLITICAL ALLEGIANCES, SPOKE TO BILL UNDER DEBATE; TONE AND CONTENT OF THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS (WITH ONE EXCEPTION) WERE STRIDENTLY ANTI-TANZANIA AND ANTI-EAC. NO MEMBER SPOKE IN FAVOR OF FURTHER EFFORTS BY KENYA TO RESURRECT THE COMMUNITY. THE BILL WAS PASSED.

5. IN ANOTHER EAC RELATED DEVELOPMENT, DAILY NATION JULY 6 CARRIERS REPORT DATED DAR ES SALAAM QUOTING TANZANIAN GOVERNMENT SOURCES AS DISMISSING REPORTS (SEE REFTTEL) THAT THERE MIGHT BE MEETING OF EAC AUTHORITY LATER THIS MONTH IN NAIROBI INVOLVING PRESIDENTS KENYATTA, NYERERE, AND AMIN. TANZANIA GOVERNMENT SOURCES ALLEGEDLY CONFIDENTIAL

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STATED THAT AS KENYA IS NO LONGER EAC MEMBER ANY SUCH MEETING WOULD INVOLVE ONLY TANZANIA AND UGANDA.

6. COMMENT: WITH ALLOWANCES FOR HIS CUSTOMARY HYPERBOLE, STATEMENTS BY ATTORNEY GENERAL NJONJO NEVERTHELESS STAND AS STARK EVIDENCE THAT POWERFUL MEMBERS OF KENYA'S INNER CIRCLE HAVE WANTED OUT OF THE AC FOR SOME TIME, AND HAVE LENT THEIR WEIGHT TO ACTIONS WHICH WOULD BRING ABOUT THAT RESULT. TO WHAT EXTENT NJONJO'S ATTITUDE IS DETERMINED BY HIS PERCEPTION OF KENYA'S NATIONAL INTEREST, AS OPPOSED TO PERSONAL DISDAIN FOR AND DISLIKE OF TANZANIA'S LEADERS AND ITS SYSTEM, IS UNCLEAR. WHAT DOES SEEM CLEAR, HOWEVER, IS THAT THE POWERFUL NJONJO WILL RESIST ANY EFFORT TO REFLOAT THE EAC OTHER THAN ON COMPLETELY KENYAN TERMS. FURTHERMORE, KENYAN PUBLIC OPINION, AS REFLECTED IN PARLIAMENT, HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY CONDITIONED TO ACCEPT AND APPLAUD THE DEMISE OF THE COMMUNITY. ANY EFFORT TO CHANGE POLICY DIRECTIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE WILL HAVE TO CONTEND WITH THAT FACT AS WELL.
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